

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending; claims 1-11, 13, 14 and 16 are rejected; claims 12, 15, 17 and 18 are objected to; and claims 19 and 20 are allowed. Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 11-13, 16 and 17 are amended hereby.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1-8 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 and 13, keeping in mind the comments offered by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1-8 and 13 are now in allowable form.

Responsive to the rejection of claims 1, 2, 11 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,280,254 (Hunter et al.), Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 11 and 16 and submit that claims 1, 2, 11 and 16 are now in condition for allowance.

Hunter et al. disclose a connector assembly (Figs. 1-7) including an actuator assembly 70. Actuator assembly 70 includes a screw 74 threadedly extending through insulator 72 holding an insulator 76 and a pair of actuators 78 and 80, which respectively have holes 82 and 84 for slidable disposition of the actuators on screw 74. Actuators 78 and 80 are made from a resilient or spring-like material. Actuator 78 is provided with a pair arms 78a and 78b (column 3, lines 29-46). Connector assembly 10 provides for electrical continuity between probes 18 and 20, and shields 30 and 32 of two separate connectors disposed within connector assembly 10 (column 4, lines 48-53). The Examiner has indicated that protrusion 78c is oriented and extends through at least one opening.

In contrast claim 1, as amended, recites in part:

at least one circuit selector having an electrically nonconductive protrusion oriented to extend through said at least one opening ...

(Emphasis added). Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Hunter et al. or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Hunter et al. discloses a connector assembly including an actuator 78 having a pair of arms 78a and 78b. Actuator 78 is made from a resilient or spring-like material and is electrically conductive. The Examiner has indicated that protrusion 78c is oriented and extends through at least one opening. Since protrusion 78c is a continuous material that extends from arm 78a, protrusion 78c is likewise electrically conductive. In contrast, Applicants' invention includes at least one circuit selector having an electrically nonconductive protrusion, which extends through the opening. Therefore, Hunter et al. and any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or suggest at least one circuit selector having an electrically nonconductive protrusion oriented to extend through the at least one opening, as recited in claim 1.

An advantage of Applicants' invention is that the electrical circuit selector assembly allows the reconfiguration of electrical circuits contained in a housing. Another advantage is that the electrically nonconductive protrusion contacts the electrically conductive conductor and causes it to engage electrically with another circuit element. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 1 and claim 2 depending therefrom are now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

In further contrast, claim 11 recites in part:

a nonconductive protrusion oriented to extend through the opening and electrically contact the electrical conductor.

(Emphasis added). Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Hunter et al. or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Hunter et al. discloses a connector assembly including an actuator 78 having a pair of arms 78a and 78b. Actuator 78 is made from a resilient or spring-like material and is electrically conductive. The Examiner has indicated that protrusion 78c is oriented and extends through at least one opening. Since protrusion 78c is a continuous material that extends from arm 78a, protrusion 78c is likewise electrically conductive. In contrast, Applicants' invention includes at least one circuit selector having an electrically nonconductive protrusion, which extends through the opening. Therefore, Hunter et al. and any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or suggest a nonconductive protrusion oriented to extend through the opening and electrically contact the electrical conductor, as recited in claim 11.

An advantage of Applicants' invention is that the electrical circuit selector assembly allows the reconfiguration of electrical circuits contained in a housing. Another advantage is that the electrically nonconductive protrusion contacts the electrically conductive conductor and causes it to engage electrically with another circuit element. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 11 is now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

In still further contrast, claim 16 recites in part:

contacting an electrical conductor through an opening in a nonconductive housing with a portion of an electrical circuit selector, said portion including a nonconductive protrusion oriented to enter said opening and electrically contact said electrical conductor.

(Emphasis added). Applicants submit that such an invention is neither taught, disclosed nor suggested by Hunter et al. or any of the other cited references, alone or in combination and includes distinct advantages thereover.

Hunter et al. discloses a connector assembly including an actuator 78 having a pair of arms 78a and 78b. Actuator 78 is made from a resilient or spring-like material and is electrically conductive. The Examiner has indicated that protrusion 78c is oriented and extends through at least one opening. Since protrusion 78c is a continuous material that extends from arm 78a, protrusion 78c is likewise electrically conductive. In contrast, Applicants' invention includes at least one circuit selector having an electrically nonconductive protrusion, which extends through the opening. Therefore, Hunter et al. and any of the other cited references, alone or in combination, fail to disclose, teach or suggest the step of contacting an electrical conductor through an opening in a nonconductive housing with a portion of an electrical circuit selector, the portion including a nonconductive protrusion oriented to enter the opening and electrically contact the electrical conductor, as recited in claim 16.

An advantage of Applicants' invention is that the electrical circuit selector assembly allows the reconfiguration of electrical circuits contained in a housing. Another advantage is that the electrically nonconductive protrusion contacts the electrically conductive conductor and causes it to engage electrically with another circuit element. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claim 16 is now in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

Responsive to the Examiner's objection to claims 12, 15, 17 and 18 and to the Examiner's indication that claims 3-10, 13 and 14 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, Applicants have amended claims 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 13 and

17, keeping in mind the Examiner's suggestions. Applicants have also placed claims 3, 12 and 17 in independent form by including the elements of the base claim, thereby placing claims 3-10, 12-15, 17 and 18 in condition for allowance, which is hereby respectfully requested.

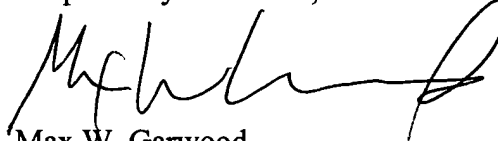
Applicants thank the Examiner for the allowance of claims 19 and 20.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the pending claims are definite and do particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Moreover, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the amended claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (260) 897-3400.

Respectfully submitted,



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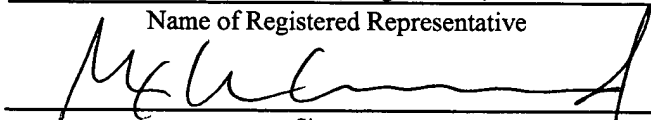
Attorney for Applicant

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: MS Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on: December 7, 2004.

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Name of Registered Representative



Signature

Dec 7, 2004

Date